GK, JC

NEW address: Rt. 7, Frederick, Md. 21701
February 29, 1968

Mr. Arthur Crook, editor
The London Times Literary Supplement
Printing House Square
London E.C. 4
England

Dear Mr. Crook,

Gradually I am learning how different things are in your country. I have already learned, from you, may I add, and I thnak you most sincerely, that while editors in the United States reserve for themselves the right to abbreviate letters, you in England absolutely refuse to do so even when authorized in advance by the writer.

Now I learn that it is the custom in your publishing and promotional circles, and I presume the best of both worlds, to keep the maximum promotion for a book so secret that the existence of the book is entirely unknown! How clever! And utterly original! And all the time I thought the very eminent warden of All Saints (how appropriate a connection!) was just a nasty, dishonest, cowardly and entirely disreputable man. I am confessing error. I owe him an apology. I most seriously underestimated him. Since he will not face me and, and he has failed to respond to the letter he solicited from me, when next you see him, will you please extend my sincerest apologies.

Of course, it may be a little while before you see him. Yet I am confident that is he sees me first, you'll still meet him before I do. He is now in the United States. This morning he graced out sir (if that is the right word) on the major network TV show, called Today. And lo and behold, he has a book. Amazingly enough, aside from having the same subject and seemingly identical content, it also bears the same title as your "article". Ah, you clever, clever, CLEVER men (again, if that is the right word- I hope you'll understand my simple colonial heritage denies me much understanding)!

This, without doubt, is the most original non-promotion for a book in history- yours or ours. First he wastes the enormous exposure you gave him, and the attendant publicity that he otherwise could not have gotten, by making no reference in your pages or the subsequent, international newspaper and electronic attention, to the fact that he had authored a book (scavenging would not then have been a nice word, nor would all those less than gentle hints about how mercenary I am, having made so much filthy profit that I am $35,000 in debt).

Then, this morning - how honored I was to see his smiling face - he has this really tremenduous exposure, and lo and behold he is promoting a book! Now there is something just as strange about this promotion as there is about your special "article" - the phrase is not mine, that is how it was identified, and I've heard no complaint about it from you or from him. You see, his book is not on sale here. My book sources cannot find where it is, can be had, or who published it. It seems to be a reprint original, which is quite appropriate for a man with his approach. But that makes me wonder, for it seems unlikely that the expense of the promotion (thinking nothing of his time, which also must have some value) can be justified by the predictable profit from so inexpensive a work. Particularly when it cannot be bought in

response to the promotion. You know, I want very much to see that book on sale in the United States. You see, I was quite serious in telling you that his inventions- excuse me, misstatements, about me and my writing are actionable. So, I phoned people in publishing in New York, and they phoned the network that aired him, Publishers' Weekly and many other sources. Apparently the biggest publishing mystery in New York today is who published the book form of your "special article".

A man less generous, and I assure you that what I have said of his eminence is generous- a man more prone to suspect the worst in people-might wonder if Mr. Sparrow is less interested in his book and profit that he is in getting an opportunity to air those views that, whether or not accurate (and this seems to concern him little), just happen to coincide with the views of the United States Government, particularly its intelligence arm. Now when one further wonders about the enormous sums of money this agency spends both abroad and in academic circles....

Of course, this is some ways is not without precedent. There is a White House correspondent who once made a single appearance with me on a radio "special". It was scheduled for a single, two-hour presentation. It just did grow to four hours, and it was aired four times, rather unusual. He sat right next to me when we taped it. He also had a book then being printed, and he also failed once to mention it. Now it happens that his book also was an original retread, selling for a dollar, and if it sold considerably better than all the reports it did not recoup its promotional and advertising costs. Its doctrine is Sparrows. Odd how this sort of thing happens only to sycophantic works pleasing to the U.S. Government, isn't it? One thinks of all those unvouchered funds.

There is another similarity between Mr. Sparrow and Charles Roberts, who wasn't at all ashamed about his use of a fine word (he called his book "The TRUTH About The Assassination"). Neither wants to confront me, Each forgoes the fine stimulous to sales his destruction of all I have printed would earn. Odd. Very uncommercial. But perhaps by now you have gathered that I believe both gentleman (there I go taking liberty with the dictionary again) are markedly uncommercial.

I think you may appreciate my wonder, my perhaps admiration, over this really strange way you British have about promoting your literary output by pretending they do not exist and then unveiling them when they cannot be purchased. So, busy as you are, I humbly beseech an explanation of how a book becomes a "special article" in England, how you publish it without mention of the book, and whether you anticipated that this seemingly non-commercial presentation would attract the kind of attention it did, ending in what I have so carefully explained to you is the attempted political assassination of the Hon. Robert Kennedy.

In his single letter to me, I am confident you will be gratified to know, Mr. Sparrow undertook to speak for you. He is, after all, I suppose, a gentleman, for in speaking for you, look at the time and trouble you were spared. I hate to think that his reflection of your views is as remote from what they really are as is his presentation of mine, but he did do it.

If your so-busy schedule permits response, would you also include a few well-chosen words about "scavengers", "promoters","those who make a career of the assassination"- and "scholars"? You have little idea how they will please me!

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg